

Concept Paper

Inviting Proposals to Designate Additional Land in the Residential Multi-Family and Residential Single Family Land Use Categories

San Luis Obispo County Planning and Building Department
October 31, 2005

Executive Summary

San Luis Obispo County houses a variety of residents such as retirees, professionals, students, and families, who all need safe, decent, and affordable housing. Housing Element Program 1.1 states that the County will amend the Land Use Element to designate additional land in the Residential Multi-Family (RMF) and Residential Single Family (RSF) land use categories to accommodate housing needed during the next five years and beyond. While the County previously designated adequate land to accommodate its share of existing regional housing needs, additional land will be needed after the planning period for this Housing Element. The County can limit price escalation of land by adding new residential land to the inventory, thereby making more feasible the construction of housing affordable to local residents. Some of the new residential land should include parcels 10 acres in size to enable proper site planning. The County can limit traffic congestion by locating additional RMF land near centers of employment, shopping, schools, parks and transportation systems.

The Housing Element documents that the County has enough land zoned RMF and RSF for its needs through June 2009, but not beyond. The aggregate amount of land the County seeks to designate in the RMF and RSF land use categories should be sufficient to accommodate 4,000 new housing units, which is the estimated number of units to accommodate growth through the year 2018 in the 2004 Housing Element. The 4,000 units are sought in currently unincorporated areas, either in new annexations to cities or in unincorporated urban areas.

The geographic region analyses for needed housing discussed below in this paper do not address the fact that local workers may be unable to afford new housing, even at higher densities. However, to encourage more affordable housing the County Planning and Building Department proposes that housing subsequently developed on such newly designated RMF and RSF land include the following minimum amounts of affordable housing:

- 10 percent should be affordable to very low-income households
- 10 percent should be affordable to lower-income households
- 10 percent should be affordable to moderate income households
- 10 percent should be affordable to “workforce households” earning between 120 and 160 percent of area median income

The geographic areas studied were broken into four regions: Central County, North County, South County, and the North Coast. Based on the geographic region research, the Central County region needs the most housing, however this region also has major

CONCEPT PAPER: DESIGNATING MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND

constraints that limit the development of housing. Consequently, housing provided in communities within a short commute to jobs in the Central County area is needed, even if the units are located within the North County, South County, or North Coast regions.

For the first stage of implementing Housing Element Program 1.1, the County is inviting private proposals to amend the Land Use Element to designate RMF and RSF land in appropriate locations. Ideally, many sites already within existing urban areas may be suitable to be designated (rezoned) RMF. However, some land outside existing urban areas may be appropriate for RMF or RSF zoning.

Reasons for inviting private proposals instead of initiating County-sponsored amendments include the following:

- The price of properties subject to privately initiated amendments might not escalate as fast as it would if the County proposed the amendments.
- The private applicants would pay for processing costs of the amendments, including any environmental review.
- Private parties might identify properties suitable for amendment proposals more quickly than the County.

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Potential for affordable housing near employment centers
- Effectiveness toward achieving the affordability objectives stated above (40 percent affordable)
- Effectiveness toward achieving the aggregate objectives by geographic region, as described below
- Proposal of some parcels 10 acres or larger in size to enable proper site planning
- Consistency with the Smart Growth Principles endorsed by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors (see attached)
- Evidence of community support
- Commitment to quality design

Proposals will be treated as General Plan amendments subject to the normal procedure for review as set forth in the County General Plan and Land Use Ordinance/Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance. The County reserves the right to deny, approve, or apply special requirements to any proposed amendment.

CONCEPT PAPER: DESIGNATING MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND

Aggregate Objectives by Geographic Region

OVERALL PLANNING OBJECTIVE: To accommodate 4,000 additional housing units within the unincorporated County. This will be accomplished through private proposals to amend the Land Use Element by designating RMF and RSF land in appropriate locations not currently zoned RMF or RSF.

Central County Region Characteristics

Central County includes the City of San Luis Obispo and the rural areas of the region, and it currently has the most imbalanced jobs/housing mix in the county. Central County has a significant deficiency of land for both RMF and RSF housing units when considering the current jobs/housing balance, growth through the year 2020¹, and potential unit capacity under existing zoning on vacant residential land.

There is approximately twice the deficiency of land for RMF (-14,090 units) than RSF (-7,304 units), however the region is in critical need of all housing types. As the population continues to grow, the jobs will continue to outpace housing units if more housing is not constructed. In order to become a more balanced county, the Central County region or its surrounding unincorporated areas should accommodate more housing.

OBJECTIVE: To provide land for housing within reasonable commute areas of San Luis Obispo, since the above mentioned units are needed to create a more jobs/housing balanced region and to accommodate growth through 2020 (see Land for Housing chart below). The City of San Luis Obispo is the only urban area within the Central County where housing expansion appears to be feasible. However, some of the need could be met in areas nearby the City, within the South County, North Coast, and North County unincorporated regions. These additional units will help alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in the Central County. Units should be a mix of RMF and RSF, with an emphasis on RMF since there is twice the deficiency of RMF than RSF land.

North County Region Characteristics

North County includes Atascadero, Paso Robles, Templeton, San Miguel, Santa Margarita, Shandon and the rural areas of the region. It currently is the closest region to a jobs/housing balance in the County based on an assumed mix of RMF and RSF units needed and a 1.03 jobs/housing ratio. The region has a slight deficiency of land for RMF housing units, and a surplus of land for RSF units when considering the current jobs/housing balance, growth through the year 2020, and potential unit capacity under existing zoning on vacant residential land.

Aside from Central County, the North County region is the only other region that would need more land for housing based strictly on research data because there are a significant number of jobs in the region and a slight deficiency of RMF (-859 units).

¹ The year 2020 was used for growth rather than 2018, as discussed in the Housing Element, because the County housing projections used in this study were calculated in five year increments (2010, 2015, 2020, etc.).

CONCEPT PAPER: DESIGNATING MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND

OBJECTIVE: To provide additional RMF housing units within the North County region so that residents can live closer to employment centers, while benefiting from more affordable housing. North County could also potentially accommodate some housing units in locations close to the Central County employment centers since it may not be feasible to address the Central County deficiency in units within its region. Units should be a mix of RMF and RSF units.

South County

South County includes Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach, Nipomo, Oceano, Avila Beach, and the rural areas of the region. It has a surplus of land for both RMF and RSF housing units when considering the current jobs/housing balance, growth through the year 2020, and potential unit capacity under existing zoning on vacant residential land.

Although there is a surplus of land for housing, South County supports a few employment centers such as Arroyo Grande, so the region could still accommodate some housing for the local workers.

OBJECTIVE: No additional RMF or RSF land is needed to support expected job and population growth within the region based on research data. However, some RMF and RSF development is still needed to support the employment centers. Units should be a mix of RMF and RSF units.

North Coast

North Coast includes Morro Bay, Los Osos-Baywood, Cambria, Cayucos, and the rural areas of the region. It has a significant surplus of land for both RMF and RSF housing units when considering the current jobs/housing balance, growth through the year 2020, and potential unit capacity under existing zoning on vacant residential land.

The North Coast region overall does not need more housing since there is a significant surplus of housing that already exists and much of the region is not close to the Central County employment area. However, the areas closer to the Central County should still be considered for the additional housing units that Central County will not be able to accommodate. The surplus of workers in Central County that do not live close to their places of employment could benefit from additional housing near Central County.

OBJECTIVE: No additional RMF or RSF land is needed to support expected job and population growth within the region based on research data. However, some RMF and RSF development is still needed to support the Central County employment areas in locations near the employment centers. Additionally, the deficiency of Central County housing units must be accommodated in nearby unincorporated areas since there is very little land to meet the need within Central County. Units should be a mix of RMF and RSF, with an emphasis on RMF since the region has a much larger surplus of RSF units.

CONCEPT PAPER: DESIGNATING MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND

Factors Studied in Research Data:

Land for Housing (in terms of housing units)

		North County	South County	North Coast	Central County
Jobs/Housing Balance	RSF	843	3,885	3,333	-8,166
	RMF	-888	3,749	3,455	-13,263
New Units Needed for Growth in 2020	RSF	6,577	4,878	2,128	1,608
	RMF	3,697	2,349	939	1,610
Net Units Needed for Balance and Growth	RSF	-5,734	-993	1,205	-9,774
	RMF	-4,585	1,400	2,516	-14,873
Potential Units Under Existing Zoning	RSF	13,362	3,277	6,687	311
	RMF	3,341	1,031	992	31
Residential Land Surplus/Deficiency*	RSF	7,628	2,284	7,892	-9,463
	RMF	-1,244	2,431	3,508	-14,842
City Annexation Proposals (see list under City annexation proposals below)	RSF	1,187	252	0	2,159
	RMF	385	60	0	752
Remaining Residential Land Surplus/Deficiency*	RSF	8,815	2,536	7,892	-7,304
	RMF	-859	2,491	3,508	-14,090

*Positive numbers in the land surplus/deficiency rows reflect no land deficiency. Negative numbers reflect land deficiencies, therefore shaded cells represent the deficiencies.

- *Jobs/housing balance for 2005:* Housing units needed were based on achieving a 1.03 jobs/housing ratio for each geographic region, which is the overall SLO County ratio. A RMF and RSF surplus or deficiency resulted in each region. Percentages for distribution of RMF and RSF needed were based on the San Luis Obispo Council of Government's (SLOCOG) Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) housing unit breakdown.
- *New units needed for growth in 2020:* Population projections for the year 2020 were used to calculate the number of households needed to accommodate growth in each geographic region. An average household size of 2.49 was used, based on 2000 Census Bureau data for San Luis Obispo County.
- *Net units needed:* Jobs/housing balance for 2005 totals minus new units needed for growth in 2020.
- *Potential units under existing zoning:* Based on each city's Housing Element and the County Housing Element, the amount of units that could potentially be built exclusively on residentially zoned vacant land (excludes vacant lots that can accommodate housing on properties zoned other than residential).
- *Residential land surplus/deficiency:* The net units needed plus the potential units under existing zoning.
- *City annexation proposals:* Current annexations in process within cities in San Luis Obispo County. Included annexations are: Margarita Area, Orcutt Area, minor SLO City annexation areas (from 2004 Housing Element), Chandler Ranch (unincorporated County portion only, remainder is included in potential units under existing zoning), Olsen Ranch, Beechwood, and Los Robles Del Mar.


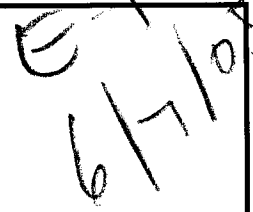
CONCEPT PAPER: DESIGNATING MORE RESIDENTIAL LAND

- *Remaining residential land surplus/deficiency:* Land deficiency plus the city annexation proposals.

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Planning and Building		(2) MEETING DATE June 7, 2005		(3) CONTACT/PHONE Chuck Stevenson, Long Range Planning (805) 805 781-5197	
(4) SUBJECT Guiding Principles for Smart Growth					
(5) SUMMARY OF REQUEST Review and discuss Smart Growth Principles that would establish <i>land use planning</i> guidelines on how growth should occur within jurisdictions in a more sustainable and quality manner.					
(6) RECOMMENDED ACTION That the Board of Supervisors approve the Guiding Principles for Smart Growth marked as Exhibit A and the attached Resolution marked Exhibit B.					
(7) FUNDING SOURCE(S) NA		(8) CURRENT YEAR COST NA		(9) ANNUAL COST NA	
(10) BUDGETED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> <input type="checkbox"/> NO					
(11) OTHER AGENCY/ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT (LIST): <u>NA</u>					
(12) WILL REQUEST REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STAFF? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>No</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, How Many? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Term _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Contract _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Help _____					
(13) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, <u>All</u>			(14) LOCATION MAP <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u>		
(15) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Board Business</u> (Time Est. 45 min)			(16) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Resolutions (Orig + 4 copies)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
(17) NEED EXTRA EXECUTED COPIES? <input type="checkbox"/> Number: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u>			(18) APPROPRIATION TRANSFER REQUIRED? <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u>		

H:\Smart Growth Principles\BOS_transmittal.wpd

(19) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-family: cursive;">  </div>	<div style="font-size: 2em; font-family: cursive;">  </div>
---	--



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

VICTOR HOLANDA, AICP
DIRECTOR

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: CHUCK STEVENSON, AICP, SUPERVISING PLANNER

VIA: VICTOR HOLANDA, AICP, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

DATE: JUNE 7, 2005

SUBJECT: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SMART GROWTH

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Supervisors approve the Guiding Principles for Smart Growth marked as Exhibit A and the attached Resolution marked Exhibit B.

DISCUSSION

At a recent day-long retreat your Board discussed individual member goals, concerns, and vision for the upcoming year and near future. Among the items your Board directed included bringing forward the list of "Smart Growth Principles". Smart Growth Principles, as you know, have been adopted by many cities and counties throughout the state of California, and across the country. In fact, several local cities and the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments have adopted such principles. These principles establish *land use planning* guidelines on how growth should occur within jurisdictions in a more sustainable and quality manner. As a result of your direction at the retreat, staff is bringing forward a set of Smart Growth Principles for your consideration and adoption. A Resolution which acknowledges the benefits of Smart Growth principles as well as links these principles to the County's Communitywide vision (Safe, Healthy, Livable, Prosperous, and Well governed) has been prepared with this report.

As your Board is aware, the current population in San Luis Obispo County stands at 260,727 and predictions estimate that nearly 100,000 more people are expected to reside in San Luis Obispo County by the year 2030. In the face of this significant growth, how can communities accommodate this population while retaining the quality of life and important resources so closely associated with this County's beauty and attraction. Your Board's leadership in adopting a set of smart growth principles would be a step toward establishing

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805) 781-5600

EMAIL: planning@co.slo.ca.us • FAX: (805) 781-1242 • WEBSITE: <http://www.sloplanning.org>

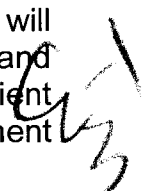
a more sustainable approach to land use planning while reinforcing the Communitywide vision of having a Safe, Healthy, Livable, Prosperous, and Well Governed county.

The term "Smart Growth" was coined by the State of Maryland in 1990 to guide governance that respects and coordinates economics, the environment and social equity (the three "E's"), to create sustainable growth. The concept of sustainability is an important governing principle which is intended to meet the needs of current generations without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs, that is to think long term in decision-making. The United States Environmental Protection Agency endorses and promotes Smart Growth as a way of bringing together traditionally opposing interests to improve community quality of life while at the same time improving the environment and the economy.

Smart Growth principles address current development patterns that are often dominated by what many call "sprawl," or low density, automobile-oriented development. These patterns of growth present special challenges to the County as we try to strike a balance between providing adequate amounts and types of housing, protect resources, provide urban and social services, and facilitate long-term economic viability. Typical land development policies and ordinances are often at odds with what has come to be known as "Smart Growth" Many believe these patterns are no longer in the long-term interest of our communities, cities, suburbs, and agricultural areas. Though supportive of growth, many communities have come to question the economic costs of continually expanding and extending urban infrastructure in communities at the edges and into suburban and rural areas. In response, Smart Growth policies draw upon the successful models of the past and present, and plan for growth that will more successfully serve the present and future population.

The Smart Growth principles in Exhibit A are similar to those recently adopted by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments. These principles relate well to the County's mission statement, "to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life in San Luis Obispo County." They provide the basis to re-focus our relationships with cities and other agencies, and to update policies in the county's Framework for Planning and ordinances. These principles could guide decisions among all departments to consider their economic, environmental and social effects, for present and future generations as well.

With adoption of these principles, steps should be taken to cultivate strategies, address barriers and advance opportunities for Smart Growth. The Department of Planning and Building has proposed several programs in our budget for fiscal year 2005/06 that are linked to these principles. For one, we will continue our collaboration with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments and other agencies to visualize the future of the county region, and attention to how county policies interface with city and district growth policies. We are also proposing to incorporate Smart Growth principles into the General Plan, specifically within the Land Use Element's Framework for Planning, key Land Use Ordinance sections, and in several Housing Element programs. Lastly, the department will focus on Housing Element implementation by looking at ways to improve incentives and remove barriers for mixed-use projects, affordable housing and more land-efficient residential subdivisions. The department will also continue its commitment to implement



existing related programs within communities.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

All county departments.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

None

RESULTS

Adoption of these principles will result in activity to implement them among county departments and other jurisdictions, to create communities that are Safe, Healthy, Livable, Prosperous and Well Governed.

9-1
4

Exhibit A

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SMART GROWTH

1. **Strengthen Regional Cooperation**

Action: The County will seek to promote regional cooperation of all jurisdictions within the region in the formulation and the carrying out of land use policy, while respecting the interests of individual towns and cities. Smart growth identifies important regional values that often cut across jurisdictional boundaries. Our local transportation networks, economy, housing market, watersheds and numerous other systems function at the regional level. Planning for the area must recognize the regional characteristics we share, provide solutions and strategies that enhance our positive aspects and protect and preserve those vulnerable to loss or degradation.

2. **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas**

Action: The County will support smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving a community's quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities. By focusing development in already built-up areas, smart growth preserves rapidly vanishing natural areas. From woodland and forest areas, ranches and farms, to wetlands and wildlife, smart growth allows us the opportunity to pass on to our children the treasured areas of San Luis Obispo County.

3. **Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities**

Action: The County will focus development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure; utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer; and conserve open space and natural resources. Will help direct funding of transportation enhancements in the communities where people live today. Opening up green space to new development means the cost of new schools, roads, sewer lines, and water supplies will be borne by residents throughout the area. Taking advantage of existing infrastructure keeps public costs and taxes down. Smart growth helps on both fronts, saving money and protecting the environment. The County will seek to put the needs of existing communities first.

4. **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place**

Action: The County will employ context-sensitive design techniques and encourage communities to incorporate smart growth design and integrate land use, transportation and public safety. The County will prioritize the retaining of distinct urban boundaries between communities, and utilize natural and man-made boundaries and landmarks to create a sense of defined neighborhoods, towns and regions. Communities should craft a vision and set standards for development that

respond to strongly held values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

5. Provide a Variety of Transportation and Land Use Choices

Action: The County will seek to provide people with balanced choices in housing, shopping, employment, communities, and transportation routes and modes of transportation – biking, public transit, walking, and driving. Those who want/need to drive can, but people who would rather not drive everywhere or don't own a car have other choices.

6. Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

Action: The County will implement the Housing Element by seeking opportunities for quality housing for people of all income levels, in proximity to employment. Communities should maximize “choices” in location, size, design, diversity, cost and type of housing. The central goal of any smart growth plan is the quality of the neighborhoods where we live. They should be safe, convenient, attractive, and affordable. Low-density development too often forces trade-offs between these goals. Some neighborhoods are safe but not convenient. Others are convenient but not affordable. Careful planning can help bring all these elements together.

7. Encourage Mixed Land Uses

Action: The County will promote integrating mixed land uses into communities as a key strategy for achieving more compact urban development, reducing dependence upon the automobile, stimulating economic activity and vitality in downtowns, improving the jobs/housing imbalance and providing for more affordable housing choices. Local communities should support mixed use development to help enrich downtown life and provide more efficient use of resources and public facilities.

8. Create Walkable Neighborhoods and Towns

Action: The County will support the development of friendly, cohesive and integrated pedestrian facilities. Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, and play and facilitate healthy choices for getting around. Air quality and health benefits have been shown where walkable communities exist, as well as reduced transportation infrastructure impacts and costs. Communities with walkable attractive downtowns have been shown to stimulate economic development.

9. Take Advantage of Compact Building Design

Action: The County will encourage communities to incorporate more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development. One of the major downfalls of sprawl is more traffic. Smart growth's emphasis on mixing land uses, clustering development, and providing multiple transportation choices helps manage congestion, pollute less, and save energy.

6-1
6

10. Make Development Decisions Predictable Fair and Cost Effective

Action: The County will support the development of clear standards and guidelines to guide the review and approval process. For communities to be successful in implementing smart growth, both the private and public sector must embrace it. The County will seek ways to reduce complexities often encountered in the development review process and improve processing times and predictability.

11. Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

Action: The County will support community and broad stakeholder collaboration. Growth in communities can create great places to live, work and play - if it responds to it's own sense of how and where it wants to grow. Community engagement creates and maintains ownership in the process and the product.

9-1
7

Exhibit B

IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

_____ day _____, 20 ____

PRESENT: Supervisors

ABSENT:

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION ADOPTING GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SMART GROWTH FOR THE
UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY.

The following resolution is hereby offered and read:

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors endorses and promotes Smart Growth as a way of bringing together traditionally opposing interests to improve community quality of life while at the same time improving the environment and the economy; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors seeks to address current development patterns that often lead to sprawl, by striking a balance between providing adequate amounts and types of housing, urban and social services, protection of resources and long-term economic viability; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors seeks to draw upon the successful models of the past and present, and plan for growth that will more successfully serve present and future populations; and

WHEREAS, Smart Growth principles relate well to the County's mission statement, "to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life in San Luis Obispo County." and that adoption of these principles will result in communities that are "Safe, Healthy, Livable, Prosperous and Well Governed."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, in a regular meeting assembled on the 7th day of June, 2005, hereby adopts the following Guiding Principles for Smart Growth as shown in the attached Exhibit "A," with the intent of engaging in implementing actions, programs and projects to succeed in achieving the principles.

Upon motion of Supervisor _____, seconded by Supervisor _____, and on the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

The foregoing resolution is hereby adopted.

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors



of the County of San Luis Obispo,

State of California

ATTEST

County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk
of the Board of Supervisors,
County of San Luis Obispo,
State of California

[SEAL]

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL EFFECT:

JAMES B. LINDHOLM, JR.

County Counsel

By: 

Deputy County Counsel

Dated: 5.26.05

Wag

Exhibit A

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SMART GROWTH

1. **Strengthen Regional Cooperation**

Action: The County will seek to promote regional cooperation of all jurisdictions within the region in the formulation and the carrying out of land use policy, while respecting the interests of individual towns and cities. Smart growth identifies important regional values that often cut across jurisdictional boundaries. Our local transportation networks, economy, housing market, watersheds and numerous other systems function at the regional level. Planning for the area must recognize the regional characteristics we share, provide solutions and strategies that enhance our positive aspects and protect and preserve those vulnerable to loss or degradation.

2. **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas**

Action: The County will support smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving a community's quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities. By focusing development in already built-up areas, smart growth preserves rapidly vanishing natural areas. From woodland and forest areas, ranches and farms, to wetlands and wildlife, smart growth allows us the opportunity to pass on to our children the treasured areas of San Luis Obispo County.

3. **Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities**

Action: The County will focus development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure; utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer; and conserve open space and natural resources. Will help direct funding of transportation enhancements in the communities where people live today. Opening up green space to new development means the cost of new schools, roads, sewer lines, and water supplies will be borne by residents throughout the area. Taking advantage of existing infrastructure keeps public costs and taxes down. Smart growth helps on both fronts, saving money and protecting the environment. The County will seek to put the needs of existing communities first.

4. **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place**

Action: The County will employ context-sensitive design techniques and encourage communities to incorporate smart growth design and integrate land use, transportation and public safety. The County will prioritize the retaining of distinct urban boundaries between communities, and utilize natural and man-made boundaries and landmarks to create a sense of defined neighborhoods, towns and regions. Communities should craft a vision and set standards for development that

2-1
10

respond to strongly held values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

5. **Provide a Variety of Transportation and Land Use Choices**

Action: The County will seek to provide people with balanced choices in housing, shopping, employment, communities, and transportation routes and modes of transportation – biking, public transit, walking, and driving. Those who want/need to drive can, but people who would rather not drive everywhere or don't own a car have other choices.

6. **Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices**

Action: The County will implement the Housing Element by seeking opportunities for quality housing for people of all income levels, in proximity to employment. Communities should maximize “choices” in location, size, design, diversity, cost and type of housing. The central goal of any smart growth plan is the quality of the neighborhoods where we live. They should be safe, convenient, attractive, and affordable. Low-density development too often forces trade-offs between these goals. Some neighborhoods are safe but not convenient. Others are convenient but not affordable. Careful planning can help bring all these elements together.

7. **Encourage Mixed Land Uses**

Action: The County will promote integrating mixed land uses into communities as a key strategy for achieving more compact urban development, reducing dependence upon the automobile, stimulating economic activity and vitality in downtowns, improving the jobs/housing imbalance and providing for more affordable housing choices. Local communities should support mixed use development to help enrich downtown life and provide more efficient use of resources and public facilities.

8. **Create Walkable Neighborhoods and Towns**

Action: The County will support the development of friendly, cohesive and integrated pedestrian facilities. Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, and play and facilitate healthy choices for getting around. Air quality and health benefits have been shown where walkable communities exist, as well as reduced transportation infrastructure impacts and costs. Communities with walkable attractive downtowns have been shown to stimulate economic development.

9. **Take Advantage of Compact Building Design**

Action: The County will encourage communities to incorporate more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development. One of the major downfalls of sprawl is more traffic. Smart growth's emphasis on mixing land uses, clustering development, and providing multiple transportation choices helps manage congestion, pollute less, and save energy.

6-11

10. Make Development Decisions Predictable Fair and Cost Effective

Action: The County will support the development of clear standards and guidelines to guide the review and approval process. For communities to be successful in implementing smart growth, both the private and public sector must embrace it. The County will seek ways to reduce complexities often encountered in the development review process and improve processing times and predictability.

11. Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

Action: The County will support community and broad stakeholder collaboration. Growth in communities can create great places to live, work and play - if it responds to it's own sense of how and where it wants to grow. Community engagement creates and maintains ownership in the process and the product.

9-1
12